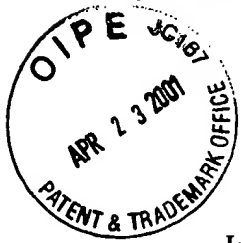traverses the Examiner's rejection. Sakano discloses a method and apparatus for setting the

retention period of received email messages based on visual screen selection. In order to further

prosecution of this case, Applicant has amended claims 1, 13, and 17 to clarify that the electronic

record is distributed when it is associated with the electronic tag. Sakano does not meet the

limitations of claims 1, 13, and 17. There is no teaching or suggestion in Sakano that an

electronic tag is created and stored at the time an electronic record (an email message for

example) is distributed. In contrast, Sakano teaches that received email is manually assigned a

retention time by the recipient. See Sakano at Fig. 3A and col. 2 lines 37-56. Claims 1, 13, and

17 recite features that are not taught, disclosed, recognized or implied by Sakano.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of claims 2-12, 14-16, and 18-

22 for reasons unnecessary to detail at this time because these claims depend from claims 1, 13,

and 17, respectively, and thereby incorporate the patentably distinguishing features of claims 1,

13, and 17 as noted above. In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully request that the 35

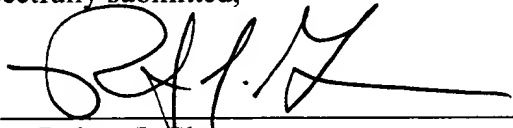U.S.C. § 102(e) rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above discussion, Applicant believes that the claims are allowable and that

the application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions, he is respectfully requested to contact Applicant's attorney

below at (612) 371-5305.

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
PATENTS
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0903
Phone: (612) 332-5300

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Name: Robert J. Glance
Reg. No. 40,620
RJG:kn

23552
PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Version With Markings To Show Changes Made

Please make the following changes to claims 1, 13, and 17:

1.   A method for managing an electronic record in a distributed computing environment, comprising the steps of:

creating an electronic tag that uniquely identifies an electronic record;

storing the electronic tag; and

distributing the electronic record <u>associated with the electronic tag</u>.

13.   [Amended] An apparatus for managing electronic records on a in a distributed computing environment, the apparatus comprising:

a computer system comprising at least one processor and at least one memory, the computer system being adapted and arranged for:

creating an electronic tag that uniquely identifies an electronic record;

storing the electronic tag; and

distributing the electronic record <u>associated with the electronic tag.</u>

17.   [Amended] An article of manufacture for managing electronic records in a distributed computing environment, the article of manufacture comprising a computer-readable storage medium having a computer program embodied therein that causes the computer network to perform the steps of:

creating an electronic tag that uniquely identifies an electronic record;

storing the electronic tag; and ·

distributing the electronic record <u>associated with the electronic tag.</u>